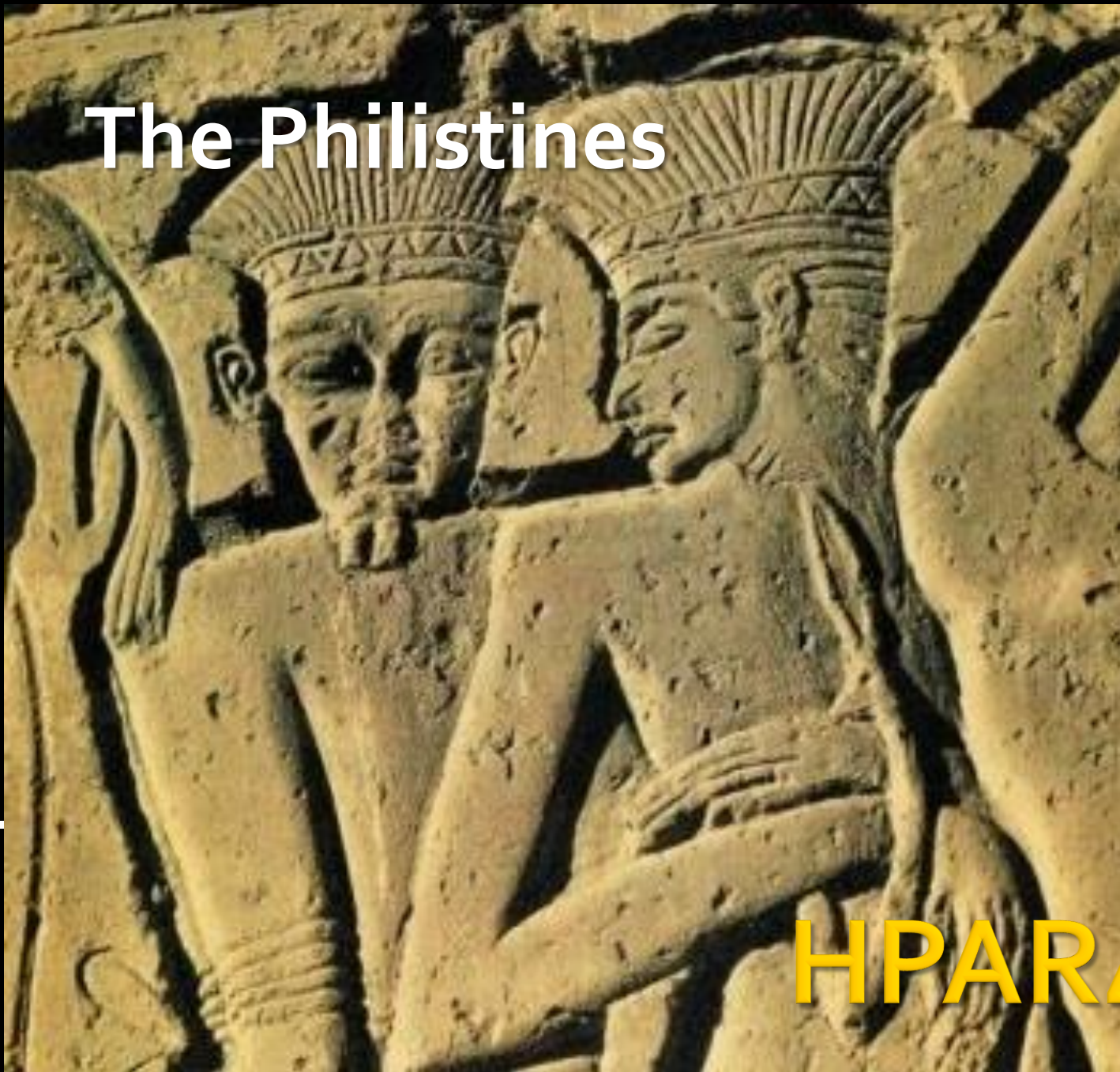


The Philistines



HPAR4005

Approaches to the Philistines

- Collapse of complex society
- Relationship between archaeology & text?
 - How reliable are both sources for historical interpretations?
 - How easy is it to integrate the two?
 - How to relate Egyptian & biblical accounts?
- Changes in material culture & population movements?
 - How should archaeologists read the evidence?



Medinet Habu reliefs



Philistine pottery

Who Were the Philistines?

- EIA population of southern Levant:
- **Pentapolis:**
 - Gaza, Gath, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron
- Intrusive population, originally from the Aegean
 - Established in Levant at the end of the LBA



Location map

The Philistines

- Study of the Philistines:
 - Uneasy conflation of archaeology, ceramic studies, Egyptian New Kingdom texts, & later biblical sources
 - Important area of **Biblical Archaeology**
 - **Highly politicised debate**
 - Recent approaches: ethnicity & archaeology
- Sources:
 - Egyptian texts, Old Testament, archaeology



Philistine sherd

Archaeological Context

- End of LBA (c.1200 BC): series of destructions throughout East Mediterranean
 - Mycenaean palaces
 - Hattusas
 - Cyprus (possible Aegean migration?)
 - Levant
- Breakdown of the complex trading networks
- Disappearance of palatial economies



East Mediterranean

Egyptian Sources

■ Medinet Habu:

- Events of year 8 of reign of Ramesses: 1177 BC
- Attack on Egypt of the confederation of sea peoples, including the Peleset
- Is this the first mention of the Philistines?



Medinet Habu

Egyptian Sources

- The countries -- --, the [Northerners] in their isles were disturbed, taken away in the [fray] -- at one time. Not one stood before their hands, from Kheta, Kode, Carchemish, Arvad, Alashia, they were wasted. {The}y {[set up]} a camp in one place in Amor. They desolated his people and his land like that which is not. They came with fire prepared before them, forward to Egypt. Their main support was Peleset, Tjekker, Shekelesh, Denyen, and Weshesh. (These) lands were united, and they laid their hands upon the land as far as the Circle of the Earth. Their hearts were confident, full of their plans

Egyptian Sources

- Medinet Habu: land & sea battles
- Population movement:
 - Women & children in carts
- Peleset: identified by their distinctive clothing:
 - Kilt & feathered headdress
- After battles **Peleset** / **Philistines** settle in southern Levant in region which becomes known as **Philistia**



Detail of sea battle



Detail of
land battle

Old Testament

- Philistines were the most dangerous enemies of the Israelites between the 12th & 10th century
- Genesis: in the time of the Patriarchs the Philistines live in the area around Gerar, ruled by king with Semitic name (Abimelech)
 - Probably early second millennium BC
- Jeremiah & Amos: the Philistines came from/through Caphtor
 - Caphtor = Kaptara = Keftiu = CRETE
- Origins of Philistines is disputed

Archaeology

- Medinet Habu representations
- Examination of intrusive material culture tradition in southern Levant c.1200 BC
- Does this evidence illustrate a change in population in the region at the end of the LBA?
- Is there any evidence for a link to the Aegean?



Philistine burial, Ashkelon

Representations

- Distinctive headdress & clothing
- Parallels with objects found at Enkomi, Cyprus (LC IIIA)



Defeated Peleset prisoners



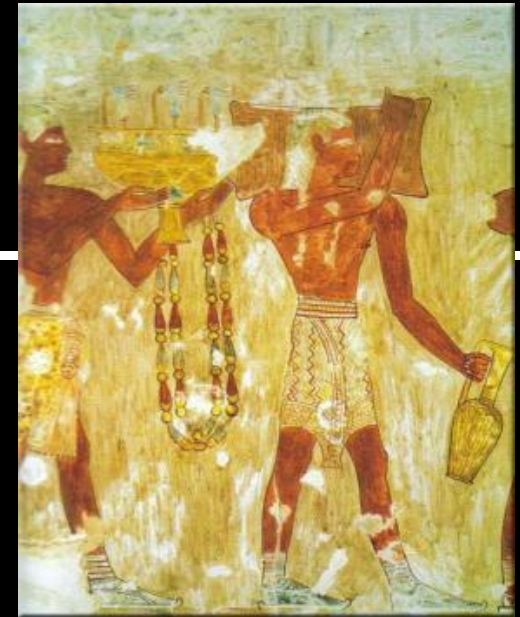
Impression of seal stone



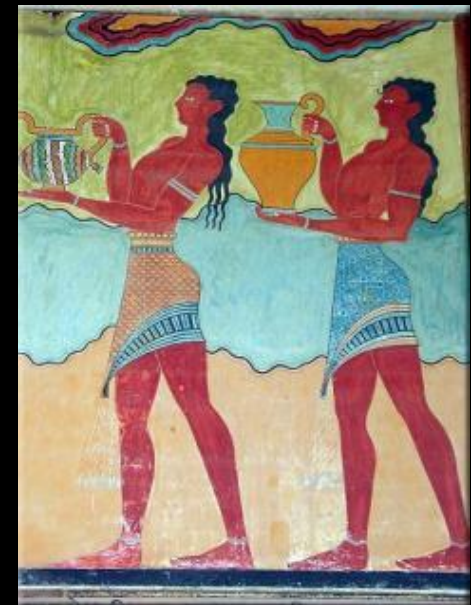
Detail of ivory gaming box

Representations

- LBA Aegean dress:
 - High status males wearing kilts
 - Egyptian representations of people from Keftiu
- Medinet Habu: dress of Peleset an important statement of their Aegean identity?



Tomb of Rekhmire



Procession Fresco, Knossos

Philistine Pottery

- Pottery: most significant change
 - Introduction of an intrusive new assemblage
 - Found in levels immediately above the LBA destructions
- Local production of Mycenaean style tableware:
 - New forms but using local clays
 - Significant changes in household practices: serving & consumption of food & drink



Philistine Pottery

- Phase 1: Mycenaean IIIC:1b pottery decorated with monochrome paint
- Phase 2: development of Philistine pottery as a new regional style
 - Develops from Mycenaean IIIC:1b pottery
 - Incorporates Mycenaean & Canaanite forms
 - Characteristic bichrome decoration indigenous to Levant
 - Acculturated or **hybrid** style: mix of different cultural traditions



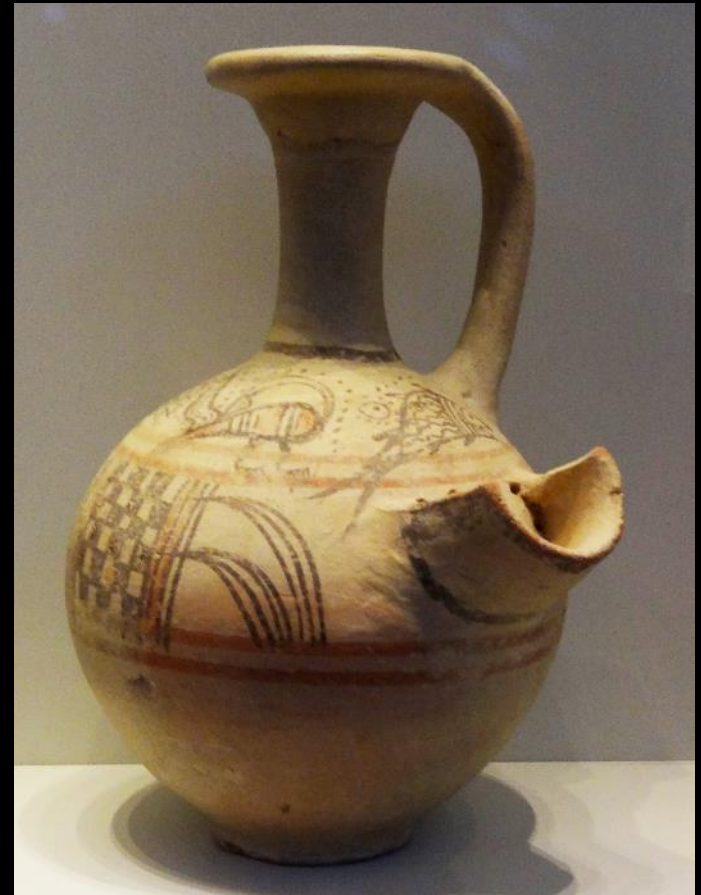
Mycenaean IIIC:1b pottery



Philistine pottery

Beer Jugs?

- Were the Philistines beer-drinkers?
- Stager (1998): Philistine beverage of choice would be wine
- Pottery: wine sets, using Aegean rather than Semitic patterns of consumption:
 - Krater: mixing wine
 - Bell-shaped bowl
 - Strainer jug: for straining out impurities



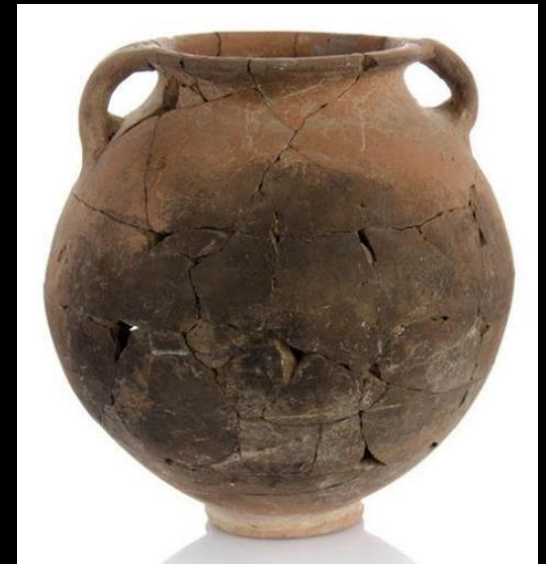
Strainer jug

Cooking Pots

- Local production of Mycenaean style cooking pots, using local clays
 - Globular cooking jug
 - Typologically & technologically distinct from earlier cooking pots
- Transmission of new modes of food preparation associated with Aegean patterns of serving & consuming food



Bronze Age cooking pot



Philistine cooking pots

Cypriot Parallels

- Similar changes in Cyprus
 - Introduction of intrusive Mycenaean style pottery tradition
 - Similar forms
 - Similar decoration
 - Mycenaean style cooking pots
- Archaeology might suggest wider wave of migrations including Philistines ?



LC IIIA pottery

Household Proeduciton

- New textile equipment:
 - Aegean style loomweights: spool weights made of unbaked clay
 - Also introduced to Cyprus in 12th century BC
- Ekron: north room of public cult building used for weaving?
 - Cultural associations between textile production & religion
- Significance in terms of population movement?



Spool weights

Cult Equipment

- New cult equipment with Aegean antecedents:
 - Ring kernoi
 - Lion's head rhyton
 - Ashdoda: seated figure
- Some parallels in Cyprus



Kernos

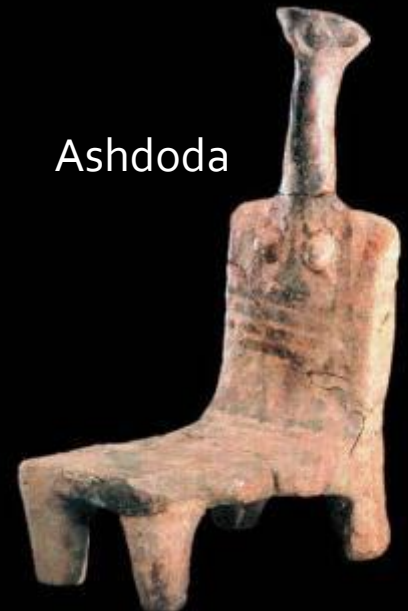


Rhyton



Mycenaean figurine

Ashdoda

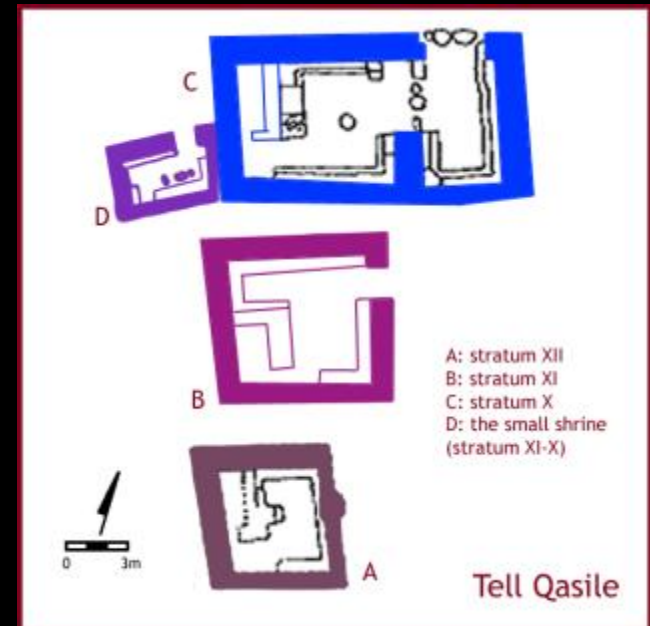


Architecture

- Introduction of hearth buildings
 - **Ekron**: public building in stratum VI
 - **Qasile** temple: large hall with central hearth
- Hearth buildings: typical of Mycenaean Greece & have ceremonial function
- Parallel phenomenon in Cyprus
- Large public building equipped with a fixed hearth reflects an Aegean cultural tradition



Ekron



Iron Metallurgy

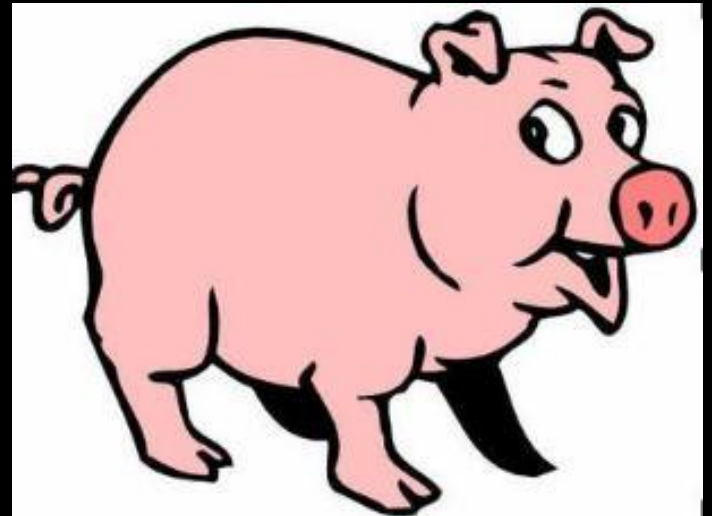
- Developed in 12th & 11th centuries
- Restricted to small, high status prestige objects used in cult contexts at Ekron & Tell Qasile
- Same form of knife is found in contemporary Cypriot tombs
- Shared status symbol reiterates cultural links between Cyprus & Philistia



Iron Knife

Economy

- Major change in animal husbandry:
 - Introduction of pig rearing
- Not a major part of LBA economy in Levant
- Short-lived phenomenon, disappears by Iron II



Economy

- LBA levels: pig bone represents less than 10% of faunal assemblage
- 12th century levels: pig bone increases to around 20% of faunal assemblage
- Possible taboo on pig-rearing & consumption by indigenous population
- Philistines: no such taboo?:
 - Different ethnic background



Pig bones

Summary

- Significant changes to archaeological record in southern Levant at end of LBA
- A number of intrusive elements which appear to have Aegean antecedents
- Parallel phenomenon in Cyprus
- Does this represent a new (Aegean) population?
- Is this to be equated with the Peleset?
- ...& the Philistines?